

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-10. (canceled)

11. (currently amended) A ~~holding ring for holding an optical element~~ method for dip treatment thereof of an optical element, comprising the step of holding the optical element, while the optical element is being dipped, by a holding ring, the ring comprising a hoop for draining and encircling a peripheral edge of the optical element, thereby exerting continuous linear contact with said peripheral edge, said hoop forming an arc over more than 180° and being provided at each of its two ends with an outwardly-directed drip tab pointing away from the optical element.

12. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 11, ~~in which~~ wherein the hoop presents an inside face in contact with the peripheral edge of the optical element, said inside face is longitudinally continuous and presents no sharp edge extending across it.

13. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 12, ~~in which~~ wherein each of said drip tab presents an inside face extending the inside face of the hoop with longitudinal continuity without any sharp edge extending across it.

14. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 11, ~~in which~~ wherein the hoop forms an arc lying in the range 250° to 280°.

15. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 14, ~~in which~~ wherein the ring forms an arc of 250° to within 10%.

16. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 11, ~~in which~~ wherein the hoop is elastically flexible.

17. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 11, ~~in which~~ wherein the free ends of the drip tabs are chamfered.

18. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 11, ~~in which~~ wherein the hoop is constituted by a section member of section that presents an inside for contacting the optical element, an outside, and two lateral sides, at least one

of the inside and the outside of the section of the hoop connecting to the lateral sides via sharp angles.

19. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 18, ~~in which~~ wherein at least one of the inside and the outside of the section of the hoop is concave, thereby forming a setback therein.

20. (currently amended) The method ~~ring~~ according to claim 11, ~~in which~~ wherein the encircling arc presents an outside face possessing two diametrically opposite striated holding portions.

21. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein, while the optical element is being dipped, the holding ring is oriented in such a manner that both of the drip tabs (10; 30) point downwards.